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Thesis

CHARACTERISTIC THEMES
in the
AMERICAN SHORT STORY

by

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CHARACTERISTIC THEMES in the AMERICAN SHORT STORY

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

For a great many years I have enjoyed reading short stories in the newspapers, in magazines, and in books containing collections of short stories, outstanding among which have been "The Best Short Stories of ----" edited by Edward J. O'Brien and "O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories of ----" with introduction by Blanche Colton Williams. This avid interest in reading many short stories for pure enjoyment led eventually to a desire for more intensive studying concerning our American Short Story. During this study and research the particular phase with which I was most intrigued was the theme, for to me this was the core, the central idea, the underlying thought of the entire story. Without theme in mind, no author could hope to write a really good short story, one which would linger long in the hearts and minds of his readers, and remain of interest to short story readers down through the years.

Too numerous to mention are the individuals who read, mostly for enjoyment, I grant, short stories of one type or another. This particular medium of writing is in accord with our pace of living today, especially when into a short piece of literature can be brought the sadness and the gladness, the hopelessness and optimism of human endeavor, all of which are pertinent and interesting themes to mankind in any country and in any period of time.

Eventually, I decided that my Master's Thesis in English would deal with that all important phase of the American Short

Story, the theme. My field of investigation and study included innumerable books of the Short Story, particularly the American Short Story from the year 1904 down to the present day.[1] In practically every book there was material on the theme ranging from a short paragraph to a page or two; much too little I felt for such an important phase of the short story. To collect all this data, scant as it was, to organize it, to fill in with my own ideas, observations, and deductions were my first steps.

Whereas all this was necessary to my study, it was, in reality, only a start. For it was not the meaning of theme, the restrictions or qualifications of theme, the expression or implication of theme, or the manner of locating the theme in which I was vitally interested; rather I was anxious to find out which themes were used most often in the American Short Story, and thus would I be able to write and say, "Thus and thus and thus are the Characteristic Themes in the American Short Story," which naturally became the title of my Master's Thesis in English.

Only one author, Mr. Ethan Allen Cross, from the large group of writers which I investigated, had given any time or attention to the grouping of themes. His catalogue did not interest me greatly, for I felt, whereas it was scholarly and scientific, it was not nearly sufficient, satisfying, or clarifying. My attention was then brought to a book entitled "36 Original Plot Situations" by George Polti. This analysis was a little nearer my conception of what I wished to do for the American

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[1] All available books in Boston Public Library, Widener Library, and Boston University C. L. A. Library.

Short Story, but I desired mine to be a little more detailed, in that I wished to list more illustrations and examples.

One method only was open to me for obtaining the information and results which I needed for my thesis. That was to read and read and read American Short Stories, not purely for enjoyment as I had once done, but for the express purpose of locating the author's central idea, underlying thought, the basic fact,---the theme, he had in mind when he wrote his story. American Short Stories to the number of one thousand odd, I read, pondered, and analyzed in order to locate the theme. Many books of short stories were used for this investigation, all of which are listed in my bibliography, but the two to which I turned most often were the yearly publications of the books, "The Best Short Stories of ----" edited by Edward J. O'Brien and "O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories of ----" with an introduction by Blanche Colton Williams. Since these books supposedly contain the best of the thousands of short stories submitted yearly by aspiring writers, I felt that I could not go far wrong for my investigation if I adhered rather closely to these publications, after having studied many collections of Representative American Short Stories.

After listing themes for as many as possible of these one thousand odd short stories, it was my task, pleasant enough, to attempt some type of classification of these themes. Ultimately I grouped them under eighteen headings which run the gamut of life in our country, including the elemental emotions,

the sadness, the gladness, the hopelessness and optimism of human endeavor. Under each heading, such as LOVE, are the general themes, 1.Love is powerful. 2.Love is beneficial. 3. Love is inevitable. 4. Love is spiritual. Under each of these general themes are the particular themes, with the title and author of the story which embodies each of these themes such as under 1. Love is powerful. may be found, Love always finds a way out of the most difficult situations. ("Jean Michaud's Little Ship"--Charles G. D. Roberts.)

May this introduction lead pleasurably to the reading of the data and results I have obtained through an intensive, enjoyable, and satisfying investigation of the American Short Story, from which investigation I am now able to present my Master's Thesis, Characteristic Themes in the American Short Story.

DISCUSSION

DEFINITIONS

"The short-story is a vital force in the modern world, but more especially in the life of the American people."[1] Although the interests of our land and people are multiform and complex, this latest form of literature is excellent to their expression, and the development of its infinite resources is a challenge to every capable writer in the field of the American Short Story.

Practically all writers and authors agree that every good short-story embodies a theme, and when the meaning of "theme" is clearly understood, then every reader also will agree that the most significant short-stories must of necessity embody themes.

Numerous are the definitions of theme, yet when each is reduced to its lowest terms the dominant idea is plainly one and the same. Let us note some of these definitions. "The theme of the story is the underlying thought, the central idea, which is an expression or intimation of the author's belief concerning some universal problem or his point of view toward a particular action."[2]

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[1] "Writing the Short Story"--J. Berg Esenwein--Noble and Noble--New York-- Page 41

[2] "Representative Short Stories"--Collected by Nina Hart and Edna M. Perry--Revised by H. Y. Moffett--The Macmillan Company--Boston--Introduction--PageXX

"The theme is the basic fact upon which the plot of the story hinges."[1]

"By theme we signify the central topic or proposition, the ultimate working thought."[2]

"The theme of a piece of fiction is the central idea which the author wishes to set forth in his story. It is that phenomenon of nature or of human life which he wishes to make clear to his readers. The theme has been called the "meaning of the piece of literature. When Edgar A. Poe spoke of the "single narrative effect' toward which every part of the story leads, he probably had in mind the same thing that we now have when we speak of 'the theme,' 'the essential meaning' 'the underlying idea,' and 'the thesis.'"[3]

"The term 'theme' is widely employed in two senses. Its commoner meaning is 'a topic, a subject of discourse.' Then there is the more technical meaning, which is the 'underlying idea.' The looser first meaning is little more than a rough indication of the dramatic narrative as a whole; it tells what

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1. "The Modern Short-Story"--Lucy L. Notestein and Waldo H. Dunn A. S. Barnes Company--New York--Page 30
2. "Short Stories in the Making"--Robert W. Neal--Oxford University Press--New York--Page 13
3. "The Short Story"--Ethan Allen Cross--A. C. McClurg and Company--Chicago--Page 26

happens. But the second meaning is the import of what happens. It is the idea of which the narrative is the dramatic expression."[1]

"In our technical sense theme means a positive declaration of some truth about life, such as 'Honesty is the best policy,' or 'Look not upon the wine when it is red.' Narrative in our technical sense is action; theme is thought about such action. Narrative is concrete; a theme is abstract. The narrative action is the body of the story, the theme its soul. The theme is never merely a part of the narrative; it is rather something expressed by the narrative."[2]

"The idea for a story, like an idea for a design, may be born in a number of ways. To some it comes suddenly, like an inspiration; in others it evolves slowly as they proceed with the task. But out of this idea, whatever its source, are spun the threads which become the warp of the fabric. This warp is the substance of the story--sometimes referred to as 'theme,' a term which is suitable enough if it is given a meaning sufficiently broad. The word 'theme' need not imply a moral, but must embrace the logical elements which make the story assume

1. "The Art and Business of Story Writing"--Walter B. Pitkin--The MacMillan Company--New York --Pages 28, 29

2. "Narrative Technique"--Thomas H. Uzzell--Harcourt, Brace and Company--New York--Page 325

a significance, ring true to experience and embody a concrete element of feeling which enables it, by virtue of its saying something true about life to justify its existence. If substance is the warp of the story--the thought element which makes the characters, actions, and setting ring true to experience--then theme is the essence of that substance--the thesis, the proposition ' which is to be proved.'" [1]

"The theme of a story is its fundamental inspiration or motif. It is generally the genesis of the story, the plot, or actual details of the story, deriving naturally from it." [2]

"The theme of the story is that central truth or idea which determines the course of the story and on which depend all the characters, all the incidents, and all the pictures which together make up the body of the story. This theme in every story must be quite definitely present in the writer's as well as in the reader's mind throughout. Everything must depend upon it, everything must be referred to it, and yet it should never be formally stated." [3]

1. "Weaving the Short Story"--Douglas Bement--Richard R. Smith--New York--Page
2. "How to Write a Short Story"--Michael Joseph--Henry Holt and Company--New York--Page 17
3. "The Short Story Case Book"--Edward J. O'Brien--Farrar and Rinehart--New York--Page 19

In looking back over these nine preceding definitions of theme, it is possible to evolve one which will embody the sum and substance of each and every one. Such a definition might read, The theme is the central, dominant, underlying idea of the story, which, in reality, is the author's expression concerning some general or particular problem or truth pertinent to human beings.

EXPRESSION andIMPLICATION of THEME

We are in agreement now that every story, at least every significant story, embodies a theme, can be reduced to a simple abstract statement of theme or situation. True, this theme may be general or remote, but no reasonable plot can be stated, based on the realities of life, that does not exemplify or contain in the concrete some truth of human existence.

Frequently, the theme is openly expressed at the beginning or end of the story; more often it is implied, merely suggested, the latter method being considered more artistic and more effective in its subtle challenge to the intellect. The more imaginative reader is pleasurably delighted with a sense of his own power when he discovers for himself the implied theme of a story. For example, "The Best Bait for Mosquitoe " would, perhaps, lose much of its force, if we were directly told, at the end of the story, that Mr. Canby's central idea, that a practical knowledge of the game, as well as mere theorizing, is needed for success in fishing and in politics.

On the other hand, Edgar A. Poe has employed a motto for the theme of his story, "Ligeia" which is stated very close to the beginning and repeated three times during the course of the narrative. "And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will, pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield himself to the angels, nor unto death,

utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

Again, in "Nerve" by William Slavins the theme is intentionally made prominent by the writer. For an introduction he has a philosophical discussion, mostly dialogue, wherein different views of the same question are presented. In the course of the dialogue the man who presently relates the story that exemplifies the theme says, "To my way of thinkin' a man shows clean game when he does the thing that's hardest for him, whereas the same thing might be just like eating a meal to me." Here the theme is stated in exact words. It is thought out and shaped up for the reader's attention before any element of the plot has been introduced. Further, the introduction is no real part of the actual plot and story; it is simply the author's device for making certain that the theme is emphasized so plainly that no reader, in the interest of the story itself, shall overlook it.

However, in "Nine Assists and Two Errors" by Charles E. Van Loan, the theme is so general that in a story of much incident, characterization, or atmosphere, it is likely to be overlooked entirely. This is almost advisable for artistic effect, provided the reader feels the theme, even though he is not consciously aware of it. In fact, some thought is required to determine the ultimate theme of this story, A winning personality overcomes prejudice and commands friendship.

Lastly, the theme of "The Ambitious Guest" by Nathaniel Hawthorne is the futility of noble ambition, but this theme is not allowed to suggest itself. Rather, it is introduced into the conversations of all the eight characters. Even the children, who have been put to bed in another room, "seemed to have caught the infection from the outside circle, and were vying each other in wild wishes, and childish projects of what they would do when they came to be men and women."

RESTRICTIONS or QUALIFICATIONS of THEMES

Certain restrictions or qualifications are noted concerning the theme of the short story.

1. "One must have for one's story a telling theme--such a theme as bears closely on some deep rooted fact of human nature. Without this theme a story might be perfect technically, yet fail to capture the mind of the reader or make his heart really throb with anxiety about the result."[1]

2. A theme should not be too obvious.

3. A theme must not be too huge or universal.

4. A theme must be striking or unique in some way. Illustrations of such themes are 1. "Women are human beings before wives or mothers. 2. Notoriety is scandal if you are poor, advertising if you are rich. 3. Temptation has no geography."[2]

5. A theme must be something a reasonable number of people will believe. It need not express only things which people already know; they may not know them until they are told; but if they recognize them and are impressed by them when they are told, then the theme has been skillfully chosen.

6. A theme should not be too controversial. This applies, mainly, when the writer wishes to sell his manuscript

1. "The Modern Short Story"--Lucy L. Notestein and Waldo H. Dunn--A. S. Barnes Company--New York--Page 44

2. "Narrative Technique"--Thomas H. Uzzell--Harcourt, Brace and Company--New York - Pages 349, 350

to the highest bidder. Examples are questions of race superiority or inferiority, religious disputes and political party allegiances.

7. Themes that are barred are 1. trite themes, 2. improper themes, 3. polemic themes, 4. unfamiliar themes.

8. A theme is never original. It is the creation of a long time and the possession of a group. It must be an expression of widespread experience or widespread belief. When a piece of fiction is analyzed it usually yields a familiar concept at its core.

9. A theme need not be true. Momentary truth is necessary to the underlying idea of a story but is the only kind of truth necessary to it. It must be true to some persons in some moods. Obviously the larger the accepting group and the longer the acceptance, the greater effect, other things being equal, the story will have.

10. A story may successfully embody more than one theme. But these themes must not be contradictory. They must be within the story not "like blocks in a box, side by side, but rather one below the other, like skins on an onion, so that momentarily the first conceals the second."[1] The later underlying idea must play upon the earlier, must enlarge it, enforce it, reveal a face of it previously unseen.

The short story, "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" is excellent for illustrating points 8,9,10 which say, in brief, The

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[1] "Writing the Short-Story"--J.Berg Esenwein--Noble and Noble--New York --Page 49

theme is never original, need not be true, and may be plural. In this narrative the characters presented are a gambler, a sluice-box robber, two disreputable women, and two young innocents, boy and girl, who, as they are eloping to be married, fall in with the quartet by accident. The story goes on to substantiate the " so much good in the worst of us," emphasizing all along the theme "Appearances are deceitful." The theme is not original; anybody can find numerous stories and sermons which exemplify it. It is a truth, but only a partial truth. The reader is prepared and willing to accept appearances as deceitful in this story because they are sometimes so. As the story proceeds, this first underlying idea proves to be not the only one. A little later the reader is aware of another, "Trustful innocence can change guilt to its own likeness." The two themes do not interfere with the reader's progress through the story, because trustfulness is the instrument piercing through appearance of evil to the heart of gold. The second idea really helps the first. Because both ideas are easily at home in a multitude of minds and because the shadow they cast is of highly optimistic bent, may account for the continued popularity of "The Outcasts of Poker Flat."

MANNER of LOCATING THEMES

Since theme is such an important part of the short story, how shall we find it? What steps shall we take to locate the underlying, dominant, central idea the author was attempting to express? It is true that in some stories there is no necessity of following any predetermined method for the author has explicitly stated his theme; but numerous are the stories where theme is implied and left to the imagination and intelligence of the reader to discover it. To go a step further, a failure to grasp the underlying meaning of certain types of story would result in a failure to understand the narrative itself. The story is wholly without meaning when the reader cannot comprehend the idea which the characters through their actions symbolize. For instance, the average student may be mystified by Hawthorne's "The Minister's Black Veil." Only the more imaginative reader may discover at the end of the narrative the underlying idea of the whole story that the black veil of the minister symbolizes a mask of unrevealing expression which men assume to hide their thoughts and feelings. To this type of story do many of Hawthorne's belong; they might aptly be termed symbolic narratives.

Every good writer has something to say; every writer worth his salt has had this something to say. All are agreed upon the necessity of saying something. Any writer of average ability can assemble the bones of a story; but the really great

masters of the art impart that touch--theme, message, moral--which gives a story life and permanence. It follows therefore, that every good reader will want to find out that "something." One of the best methods he can possible use is to ask two pertinent questions. 1. "What am I being told this story for?" 2. "What judgment on life does it contain for me?"[1] Or an equally good method to follow in determining the theme is to begin his statement of the theme by saying to himself, The author's purpose in writing this story was to show that---.

The theme the author has most prominently in mind cannot always be determined at the first glance, though it usually comes to the surface after careful study. For this reason two people reading the same story may not agree as to its theme.

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1. "Weaving the Short Story"--Douglas Bement--Richard R. Smith--New York--Page

GROUPS of THEMES

Numerous are the themes to be found, expressed or implied, in the American Short Story,,but they are so decidedly different in their nature that no clear idea of their variety can be obtained without grouping them like with like.

At the outset, all students of the short story are agreed that the heroism, the futility, the humor, the pathos, the inherent worth and beauty of life in the narrowest circumstances are the themes of the greatest writers of the short story. Even though a story may be possessed of the Orient and interest through its novelty, it must reflect the sadness and the gladness, the hopelessness and optimism of human endeavor, if it would live in the hearts of men.

The greatest themes are those dealing with some universal phase of human life, with some matter supremely interesting to mankind in any country and in any period of time. Love, Jealousy, Hate, Devotion to an Ideal, Courage, and Fear--all the elemental emotions, do not depend upon time or place. Stories embodying such themes as these were popular a thousand years ago, if artistically presented; they are read with keen interest today; and will thrill their multitudes of readers a thousand years hence. Our manners change, our speech changes, we build differently; we come to think differently; our ethical and religious principles undergo slow transformation; but there

are elemental depths below these currents which, if they change at all, change like nature itself with the slow march of mileniums.

How, then, shall we group our numerous themes in order to appreciate to the full their variety? One author, Ethan Allen Cross, has said, "It is hardly possible under a half dozen headings to classify all the kinds of themes, for there are sure to be, now and then, stories which refuse to submit to the bonds of general classification. Nevertheless, under a few heads the typical themes may be catalogued."[1] Following are Mr. Cross's groupings with some short discussion under each heading.

1. The exhibition of some natural law, or apparent lawlessness of nature.

"A story might be made to illustrate even so prosaic a thing as the physical law. Action and reaction are equal and in opposite directions. Likewise the philosophical law, Like causes produce like effects, might be embodied in a short story."[2] These would be themes illustrating natural laws,

1. "The Short Story"--Ethan Allen Cross--A. C. McClurg and Company--Chicago --Page 28

2. Ibid--Pages 30,31

but there might be, just as well, themes illustrating the lawlessness of nature.

2. An illustration of a phase of human nature.

This kind of theme may be found in "Old King Solomon of Kentucky" by James Lane Allen. No matter how low a man may sink, the story seems to say, there is some spark of the heroic left in him, and this may be aroused if the stimulus be of the right kind, at the right time, and sufficiently strong.

3. The exhibition of some human passion in a striking, unusual, or tense situation.

The passion most commonly exhibited is love; but writers have used over and over all the elemental human passions, such as hate, fear, jealousy, indignation, superstition, devotion to duty, loyalty to friends or kinsmen, loyalty to clan or country and the like.

4. The reproduction of a phase of life in a given time, place, or occupation.

Authors do not ordinarily use place, time, and occupation as the themes of stories. Once in a while, however, we do find stories which appear to be written with no other purpose than to make a picture of life, bringing forward what is usually the background, and placing it in the focus of interest as the main theme. "Pere Raphael" by Cable, seems to

have just such a theme---the reproduction of a phase of life in a particular place at a particular time--the New Orleans of 1820.

5. The delineation of character.

The characters pictured in stories whose main purpose is character portrayal are in most cases in some way unusual, striking, odd, or peculiar. "Quite So" by Thomas B. Aldrich is illustrative of this grouping.

6. The development or disintegration of character under the stress of some emotion or circumstance.

This group will overlap both group five and three but there are many stories in which the main purpose of the author was to show development or breaking down of character under emotional stress. Such a story is "The Great Stone Face" by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Only a few great short stories have adequately managed character development, but the excellent short story writer may create so convincing an impression of character growth or disintegration as to produce the illusion of the whole process in actual operation.

7. An impression of life.

In such stories as might come under this heading there is no universal truth to be taught, no moral to be impressed, no new theory of cause to be advanced, no strange corner of the world to be exploited. Evidently, the author

wishes simply to entertain with a good story; and to do this he simply embodies an impression.

Mr. Cross would include under this last heading a great many stories not easily classified under the other headings. He would have it a sort of receptacle for the multitude of miscellaneous stories that refuse to consort with those typical stories which have class characteristics.

The classification of themes of short stories by Mr. Ethan Allen Cross is the one and only grouping that I have located in my study of Characteristic Themes in the American Short Story. True, it is a worthy and scholarly classification, but to me it is not nearly sufficient, satisfying, or clarifying. His headings are much too general and scientific; they do not seem to get to the core of my conception of theme and therefore naturally would not coincide with my idea of the classification of characteristic themes in the American Short Story.

CATALOGUE
of
CHARACTERISTIC THEMES in the AMERICAN SHORT STORY

A classification of characteristic themes of the American Short Story which the average reader could readily understand was my ultimate goal as I worked out the following catalogue. Simplicity in headings throughout has been my keynote, but this simplicity has been accompanied by several sub-headings and numerous illustrations. All the characteristic themes I have grouped under eighteen headings which run the gamut of life in our country, including the elemental emotions, the sadness, the gladness, the hopelessness and optimism of human endeavor.

Under each main heading, such as LOVE, are the general themes, 1. Love is powerful. 2. Love is beneficial. 3. Love is inevitable. 4. Love is spiritual. Under each of these general themes are the particular themes, with the title and author of the story which embodies each of these themes. For example, under Love is powerful. may be found Love always finds a way out of the most difficult situations. ("Jean Michaud's Little Ship"--Charles G. D. Roberts) The same procedure has been used in working with all the other headings in my catalogue.

Frequently I found that two themes seemed to be worked out in one story which fact made a decision of classificatiin difficult, but practically always I put that story and its particular theme under that heading which listed the stronger of the two themes.

LOVE

Love is powerful.

1. Love eventually conquers all, even time.

   ("The French Village"--James Hall)

2. Love always finds a way out of the most difficult situations.

   ("Jean Michaud's Little Ship"--Charles G. D. Roberts)

   ("The Camel's Back"--F. Scott Fitzgerald)

   ("A Friend of Napoleon"--Richard Connell)

   ("A Red-Haired Cupid"--Henry Wallace Phillips)

   ("The Belle: or Love under the Rose"--Helen Irving)

   ("The Schoolmaster's Progress"--Caroline Kirkland)

3. The close wing of love covers the death-throb of honor.

   ("The Inlet of Peach Blossoms"--Nathaniel P. Willis)

4. Ever since men and women have loved they have built grand hopes upon very slight foundations.

   ("My Terminal Moraine"--Frank R. Stockton)

5. Intense love and admiration of a poor child for his teacher find a way out for bringing her a gift.

   ("A Christmas Present for a Lady"--Myra Kelley)

6. Love is such a powerful factor it can keep the heart of woman young, while her outward appearance grows aged.

   ("The Waiting Years"--Katharine M. Roof)

7. A mother's love and admiration of her son are boundless.

   ("Mummery"--Thomas Beer)

8. A woman's love for a man is so strong she will risk her life to save him from impending danger.
   ("The Kiss of the Accolade"--James W. Bennett)
9. Steeples of fame and fortune are pushed aside and forgotten when the arrow of Cupid strikes the heart of a supposedly immune man.
   ("Towers of Fame"--Elizabeth Irons Folsom)
10. The love for a departed one may bring an unbalanced mind to the one left behind.
   ("The Departure"--Selma Robinson)
11. Love excites a man to such a degree that he knows not what he is doing.
   ("Horse Thief"--Erskine Caldwell)
12. There's no accounting for the passions of a woman; sometimes they affix themselves to that man who is shameless in all his actions towards her, and forget entirely the man who has done much for her.
   ("Cane River"--Lyle Saxon)
13. No matter how great the odds, a person with love of circus in his blood, will go on to the bitter and glorious end.
   ("Balacchi Brothers"--Rebecca Harding Davis)
14. Love of boy for his dog is so great he is ready to sacrifice his own already given promises to allow dog to

fight and to forego the honor of his county.

("Honor of the County"--Walter D. Edmonds)

15. The love of a father for his son manifests itself in a queer way at times.

("The Peculiar Treasure of Kings"--Marjory Stoneman Douglas)

16. The love of a man for a woman , be she only his mistress, is so strong he cannot live without her and chooses death as a means of escape.

("The Assignation"--Edgar A. Poe)

17. Love for one's country is so strong in most individuals it eventually transcends all ambitions, hopes, and desires.

("The Bounty-Jumper"--Mary Synon)

("The Patriot"--William Polk)

Love is beneficial.

1. It's better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved, for at least one has those beautiful memories to comfort one, later in life.

("Everybody's Chance"--John Hubberton)

("Contact"--Frances N. Hart)

("Mrs. Lancaster Jones"--Edita Morris)

2. A life time of watching and waiting is not too great a sacrifice for a woman to make for the man she loves.

("Six Dollars"--Wilbur D. Steele)

3. When the spark of love goes out of a woman's life, much of the beauty and brightness goes too.

("The Beggar of Alcazar"--Konrad Bercovici)

4. A woman's faith in God and love for her family stand her in great stead when faced by tremendous danger.
("Circumstance"--Harriet P. Spofford)
5. Off with the old love and on with the new may bring about some real happiness.
("Tact"--Thomas Beer)
6. The love of a mother for her child is the biggest factor in the happiness of both.
("Fifty-Two Weeks for Florette"--Elizabeth A. Heermann)
7. Love is wonderful, nothing grander, until it interferes with egotistical idea of oneself.
("The Actor"--Nunnally Johnson)
8. A man's love for Nature in the form of fishing and hunting is the very essence of his life as dear to him as another vocation is to another individual.
("Old Red"--Caroline Gordon)
9. Love for a good man, a woman's ideal, may help her to go straight under the most squalid circumstances.
("The Wager"--Isa U. Glenn)
10. Mutual interests help to develop and bind the love of man and woman.
("A River Combine"--Raymond S. Spears)

Love is inevitable.

1. Love may come under surprising circumstances to individuals.

   ("Old Maid"--Rose Wilder Lane)

   ("At the End of His Rope"--Florence M. Kingsley)

2. Love blooms in the least expected places.

   ("The Love-Letters of Smith"--Henry C. Bunner)

3. Love is bound to bloom under the most squalid circumstances.

   ("The Lotus Eaters"--Virginia Tracy)

4. Even out on an island a man is susceptible to the wiles of a woman.

   ("Maud Island"--Erskine Caldwell)

5. Romance is the slave of neither times nor places.

   ("A Municipal Report"--O. Henry)

Love is spiritual.

1. Human beings can rarely sustain a lofty note beyond the measure of a supreme moment.

   ("The Thing They Loved"--Maurice Rutledge)

DECEPTION

Appearances are deceiving.

1. There's so much good in the worst of us.

   ("The Outcasts of Poker Flat"--Francis Bret Harte)

   ("A Derelict"--Richard H. Davis)

   ("The Wager"--Isa U. Glenn)

2. Under the surface, a man may be a coward, although his outward attempts at a great sacrifices may testify to the contrary.

   ("A Purple Rhododendron"--John Fox, Jr.)

3. An apparently good and unselfish deed often produces trouble.

   ("No Flowers"--Gordon A. Smith)

4. Youth's apparently hardened callous exterior is not sufficient when pitted against his sympathy and soft heart of his interior.

   ("Gold Mounted Guns"--F. R. Buckley)

5. All is not gold that glitters. Society in all its outward splendor is not to be compared with the companionship of old and tried friends.

   ("The Hat of Eight Reflections"--James Mahoney)

6. The dilettante sees neither the humour nor the tragedy of real life, whose repressions mean to her only absense of thought and emotion. Beneath the exterior

stolidness and monotony of individuals can be found glowing, ambitious emotional interiors.

("Home Brew"--Grace S. Mason)

7. Tears are not for the deceased but for the shedder.

("Rachel and Her Children"--Frances Newman)

8. Justice as exemplified in our courts is far from justice as defined in the dictionary.

9. Everything we do is done for our own happiness, although it does not appear that way on the surface.

("Wings for Janie"--Laverne Rice)

10. Apparently altruistic actions may be but the sham for inward, personal gain.

("Mrs. Protheroe"--Booth Tarkington)

11. The ignorance and innocence of the uninitiated country bumpkin make him the prey of the city slicker.

("The City of Refuge"--Rudolph Fisher)

12. Happiness cannot be measured by one's wordly success, for behind all that may be the ideal which a person ultimately will strive for, even though it may have been temporarily pushed aside.

("The Distant Street"--Francis Edward Faragoh)

13. The dreaming instinct, which carries us into far distant places and a love for romance, is found

hidden below the surface of the real individual.

("Phantom Adventure"--Floyd Dell)

14. Things are never as wonderful as they seem.

("Absolutely Perfect"--Sara Haardt)

15. Wolves may masquerade in sheep's clothing and bearded men may earn their living as feminine trapeze artists.

("Mlle. Olympe Zabriski"--Thomas B. Aldrich)

16. The black veil is but a mask men assume to hide their thoughts and feelings.

("The Minister's Black Veil"-- Nathaniel Hawthorne)

17. Under the rough manner and speech may be found unexpected gentleness.

("The Luck of Roaring Camp"--Bret Harte)

18. Man may be apparently kind, gentle, and pleasant to his audiences, but to his wife and family he may be rough, beastly and sullen.

("The Tenor"--Henry C. Bunner)

19. The loquaciousness and garrulity of an individual may deceive the unsuspecting person to the finish.

("Two Letters"--Brander Matthews)

20. Beauty is more than skin deep.

("Alice"--Sherwood Anderson)

21. One may profess to be governed by his reason, but usually under strain and test, he finds it is his

emotions which guide his actions.

("Against His Judgment"--Robert Grant)

22. The illusions of man tend to be far richer than the realities of man.

("The Hall Bedroom"--Mary E. Wilkins Freeman)

23. Unfair competition is to be found even among the business enterprises of the slightest degree.

("The Cats Which Cried"--Whit Burnett)

Deception is permissible.

1. To deceive is sometimes better than to tell the truth. Love can stand a little deception.

   ("The Heart Being Perished"--Frances M. Frost)

2. Deception may be stopped to as a cure for a braggart.

   ("The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County"--Mark Twain)

3. Deception is permissible if it will help ease another individual's situation, but one must know when to stop making use of this art.

   ("Marjorie Daw"--Thomas B. Aldrich)

   ("The Old Partisan"--Octave Thanet)

SACRIFICE

Sacrifice is boundless.

1. Lest her father be killed, a daughter sacrifices herself.
   ("The Soul of the Great Bell"--Lafcadio Hearn)
2. Intense love and admiration of a dog for his master will cause him to sacrifice himself as often and as much as is necessary.
   ("For the Love of a Man"--Jack London)
3. A half-brother will sacrifice his life for the other in order to bring a letter to the latter's girl.
   ("The South Devil"--Constance F. Woolson)
4. A mother will sacrifice everything for her son and truth, although her son is a half-wit.
   ("Butterflies"--Rose Sidney)
5. The love of a mother for child and her security causes her to do queer things.
   ("The Rotter"--Fleta C. Springer)
6. To live up to one's own ideals of honesty and fair play often causes one to sacrifice his and possibly another person's happiness.
   ("The Water Hole"--Maxwell S. Burt)
7. A grandfather will sacrifice his greatest ambition, to return home to his native land, for the welfare of his

grandson's education.

("Zelig"--Benjamin Rosenblatt)

8. Tremendous love and loyalty of a father for his son cause him to give up much of his life in an attempt to dispel all suspicion for wrong doing supposedly committed by his son.

("Footfalls"--Wilbur D. Steele)

9. A woman will risk great dangers, even possible death, to gain that which will bring happiness to her own loved ones and home.

("The Face in the Window"--William D. Pelley)

10. A dog is willing to stand anything for the master who has helped him to conquer a great fear.

("Comet"--Samuel A. Derieux)

11. Devotion and sacrifice of a man for the woman he loved brought many trials and sorrows to him.

("Uriah's Son"--Stephen V. Benet)

12. A boy will do everything for the master who had first picked him up when a starving orphan.

("Useless"--Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements)

13. The intense love of a man for his horse will lead him to do almost anything to help the latter.

("A Ride with a Mad Horse in a Freight Car"--
W. H. H. Murray)

14. The desire to help one in distress is strong in human beings, even in a child.
("The Eve of the Fourth"--Harold Frederic)

15. Lying is usually covered up by the ones nearest to the liar and thus that person is affected most, for he himself lies to help the liar.
("The Liar"--Henry James)

16. Family tradition must not in any way be besmirched, even though the supreme happiness of the young son be at stake.
("His Sacred Family"--Helen R. Hull)

17. A mother will do most anything, will even become a thief for her child's safety, happiness, and success.
("Treesby"--Ada Jack Carver)

18. A man or woman is ready to sacrifice his or her dearest possession for the happiness of his or her mate.
("The Gift of the Magi"--O. Henry.)

19. The highest honors and material successes are as nothing compared to a man's sense of honor and duty towards his son and the woman who is the mother of that son.
("Shadowed"--Mary Synon)

20. The maternal instinct which bids a woman comfort her baby wins in the struggle against death and fear of pain.
("Maternal"--Ethel C. Eliot)

CHANGE UNDER TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCE

Time and tide wait for no man.

1. The world is a changing place and man must adjust himself to this new type world if he has been absent from it for a long period of time.

   ("Rip Van Winkle"--Washington Irving)

   ("Peter Rugg, the Missing Man"--William Austin)

2. How lightly man values a love until he finds he cannot recall the past with its shining days of fortune.

   ("Rosemary for Remembrance"--Henry Harland)

3. A man cannot expect to stay away eighteen years from his home town and companions and return to find all as he left.

   ("The Return"--Sherwood Anderson)

4. An individual, nicely adjusted to a system, who steps aside for even a moment, may lose his place forever, and become the Outcast of the Universe.

   ("Wakefield"--Nathaniel Hawthorne)

Time creates changes.

1. Time is a great healer of differences.

   ("The White Old Maid"--Nathaniel Hawthorne)

2. Different stages of life bring different types of happiness; the one we, personally, are enjoying is considered the happiest by us.

   ("The Happiest Time"--Mary Stewart Cutting)

3. When life seems darkest, then may come the ray of sunshine.

   ("The Next Corner"--Guy Wetmore Carryl)

4. Man is not a mere machine which can readily adjust himself to new conditions; but rather the habit of living is so strongly entrenched, it necessitates much time and some of the old life along with the new, to make him receive any enjoyment from a new type of life.

   ("How Does It Feel to Be Free?"--Manuel Komroff)

5. That which is an accepted custom for one generation or race is not for a later one.

   ("Singing Woman"--Ada Jack Carver)

6. Time is one factor which helps to heal old wounds and to cast out pride and bring humility.

   ("The White Old Maid"--Nathaniel Hawthorne)

7. The generous hearted man may find himself poor at the end of his life but his friends will be many and tried and true.

   ("A Colonel of Kentucky"--Irvin S. Cobb)

Circumstances create changes.

1. When a person is denied again and agains every chance to do honest work, he has no alternative except to steal, or to do something of a similar dishonest nature.

   ("Extra Dry"--Owen Wister)

2. When death seems inevitable in an extraordinary set of circumstances, delivery frequently comes under one guise or another.

   ("The Man in the Reservoir"--Charles F. Hoffman)

3. The hopes and love a man may build up in his family may be shattered in a moment by an outside influence.

   ("Redbone"--Ada Jack Carver)

4. When the heart of a man is buried in the home and ties of his youth and the greater part of his life, it is practically impossible for him to be happy in more modern and new surroundings.

   ("Martha's Fireplace"--Hamlin Garland)

5. Inability to procure work or incapability of continuing life's work brings one to do queer things even to one's benefactor.

   ("Coroner's Inquest"--Marc Connelly)

6. It is impossibility for some to adjust themselves to a decidedly different environment--country to city life.

   ("A Michigan Man"--Elia W. Peattie)

7. The simple pleasures and intense joy a young boy gets out of life and out of worshipping a man who knows much about horses are destroyed when he sees that man do anything not up to par.

   ("I Want to Know Why"--Sherwood Anderson)

8. An adolescent's ideals and worship of heroes are easily broken by lack of judgment on heroes' parts.
   ("Two Heroes"--Harold W. Brecht)
9. The staunchest piece of human nature may be shaken by the attention of a beautiful woman of title.
   ("Mr. Bisbee's Princess"--Julian Street)
10. Sometimes a duty becomes so burdensome for even the most faithful that he or she has to break down by having a little passing fling at life.
   ("The Faithful Wife"--Morley Callaghan)
11. The human element seems to be lacking in the machine age.
   ("Episode in a Machine Age"--Cambray Brown)

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRIVIAL

It's the little things in life that count.

1. A triviality may expand into great size and import.
   ("Miss Eunice's Glove"--Albert F. Webster)
2. Little acts of kindness may inadvertently bring about important results.
   ("The Sofa"--Frank Whitlock)
3. A trivial act or word, done or spoken carelessly, may result in trouble and sorrow for the people themselves and for many others.
   ("Old Man Ledge"--May Stanley)
4. A little deed, word, or article may inadvertently be the cause of tremendous heartbreak, suffering and even death.
   ("The Last Room of All"--Stephen F. Whitman)
5. A moment of madness may bring a life time of regret. A trivial act or word may bring about the most surprising of incidents.
   ("Sinners"--Kathleen Norris)
6. A small impulse may destroy the entire overt structure of a man's life.
   ("Those Old Lunes! or, Which Is the Madman?"--William G. Simms)
7. It takes such a little remark or act to make or break the happiness of a newly-wedded pair.
   ("Mr. and Mrs. Fairbanks"-- Morley Callaghan)

8. A word, spoken in chance, may bring about surprising results.

   ("The Return"--I. K. Friedman)

9. That little act one does which appears to be exactly the wrong thing to do often is the cause in the end of bringing about the desired circumstances.

   ("The Diamond Ring"--Julia Peterkin)

10. A few words spoken in an unguarded moment of anger proves the downfall of a strong man.

11. Divorce would often be unnecessary if the married pair could be made to forget their little annoyances, and realize their real affection for each other.

   ("The Whirligig of Life"--O. Henry)

12. Fortunes have been made and spent; castles have been built and wrecked, on paper; lives have been utterly ruined by the few words suggesting the leaving of money, in a will.

   ("The $30,000 Bequest"--Mark Twain)

13. A chance remark, miscontrued, may lift an individual to heights from which he drops unceremoniously.

   ("The Two Churches of 'Quawket"--Henry C. Bunner)

14. A bit of sympathy, a human word or two, will do more to get an individual to do what you wish than all the threats, disciplining, and beatings in the world.

   ("The Inmate of the Dungeon"--W. C. Morrow)

SUCCESS

Success is dependent on certain personal human traits.

1. Self-confidence is essential to success and one of the best ways to gain it is to grab hold of a car and drive it--literally.

   ("Professor Todd's Used Car"--L. H. Robbing)

2. Victory is bound to come to the man who can put trivialities and personal differences into the background and bring to the fore courage, initiative, determination and grit.

   ("His Job"--Grace Sortwell Mason)

3. Hope and resourcefulness of individual bring him out the victor.

   ("While the Automobile Ran Down"--Charles Battell Loomis)

4. Fearlessness, courage and initiative change an impossibility into a certainty.

   ("The Run of the Yellow Mail"--Frank H. Spearman)

5. Study of human nature is a greater aid to success than the acquired tricks of the "go-getter school."

   ("Salesmanship"--Mary Ellen Chase)

6. Courage, perseverance, determination, and ingenuity are all necessary traits to the individual's success, especially when in a straitened set of circumstances.

   ("The Pit and the Pendulum"--Edgar Allan Poe)

   ("A Struggle for Life"--Thomas B. Aldrich)

("The Lubber"--Bill Adams)

("The Bamboo Trap"--Robert S. Lemmon)

("The Horse of Hurricane Reef"--Charles Tenney Jackson)

7. To have the courage of one's convictions and to combine with them some common sense will enable one to go far.

   ("Mr. Downey Sits Down"--L. H. Robbins)

8. The happiness of an unloved, homely woman may come from her silent worship and acts of adoration of an ideal man.

   ("Celestine"--James Hopper)

9. Success in marriage depends primarily on love, not money.

   ("Him and Her"--Katharine Brush)

Success is dependent on outside influences.

1. It frequently happens that one individual may, quite unsuspectingly, help another to attain the award he is seeking.

   ("A Brace of Boys"--Fitz Hugh Ludlow)

2. Through queer channels sometimes comes aid to one who lacks the moral strength to act for himself and to win success.

   ("The Transferred Ghost"--R. F. Stockton)

3. Belittling individuals, especially men, does not make

them finer and worthier persons, respect for them and faith in them brings greater results.

("The Continental Angle"--William Dudley Pelley)

4. One way to cure an individual is to give him some of his own medicine.

   ("Wild Earth"--Sophie Kerr)

5. The modern sophisticated young lady stops at nothing to gain the man she wants for a husband.

   ("Claustrophobia"--Abbie Carter Goodloe)

Success is frequently delayed.

1. What appears to be a grave disappointment or failure, at first, may frequently turn out to be a good thing, for because of the initial failure, many events may follow which will, in reality, turn that failure into a success.

   ("A Successful Failure"--H. C. Bunner)

2. What appears first to be a near calamity may prove to be but the start of a joyous undertaking.

   ("At the End of His Rope"--Florence Morse Kingsley)

LOYALTY

Loyalty is powerful.

1. Family name and tradition is a tremendous factor in the life of certain people.

   ("Splendid with Swords"--Wyth Williams)

2. The hidden loyalty of one man for another shows itself plainly at the appropriate time.

   ("The Survivors"--Elsie Singmaster)

3. Loyalty of one fellow to his boyhood friend is sufficient bond to raise each above jealousy.

   ("The Sixth Shot"--Samuel A. Derieux)

4. Loyalty and love of dog for his master is strong enough to cause a dog to lose his life while defending his master.

   ("As a Dog Should"--Charles Alexander)

5. Loyalty and admiration of a soldier towards his general may be so deep-rooted that he never can forget him and his duties toward him throughout his life.

   ("Guard of Honor"--Barry Benefield)

6. Desire to do as much as possible not to let down a father will give a son interminable resistance.

   ("A Matter of Loyalty"--Lawrence Perry)

7. A little hero-worshipper is willing to risk his own life for his hero, the quiet man on the elephant.

   ("The Heart of Little Shikera"--Edison Marshall)

8. Loyalty to a railroad company turns desire for revenge into unceasing activity to get that company out of an extremely difficult position.
   ("Martin Garrity Gets Even"--Courtney Ryley Cooper and Leo F. Creagan)
9. The unwavering touching allegiance of one man for another is tremendous.
   ("Tennessee's Partner"--Bret Harte)
   ("Intervention of Peter"--Paul L. Dunbar)

Loyalty is beneficial.

1. Loyalty to a high ideal lifts man to noble thoughts and action.
   ("The Great Stone Face"--Nathaniel Hawthorne)
2. There's nothing quite so satisfying as a tried and true friend, especially to one who is otherwise alone in the world.
   ("Sunday Morning"--Dorothy McCleary)
3. Despite the hardships encountered in the apprenticeship at sea, a young man will forego everything to be able to stick it out.
   ("Home Is the Sailor"--Bill Adams)

REVENGE

Revenge is sweet.

1. Revenge is sweet to the man on whom a clever joke has been played, when he plays a still cleverer joke, using the first man's own interests as basis.
   ("Amazement"--Stephen French Whaiman)
2. Revenge is sweet to him who has been told lies.
   ("Bulldog"--Roger Daniels)
3. Revenge is sweet for the woman whose husband has ruined her father and eventually herself and child through his petty grievances.
   ("A Double-Barreled Detective Story"--Mark Twain)
4. Revenge is sweet even if it's only telling bigger and better yearsn than your annoying guest has just narrated.
   ("The Widow's Cruise"--Frank R. Stockton)
5. Revenge is sweet to the man who has been previously hurt but its effects may be tremendous on so many people that later he too must necessarily suffer.
   ("The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg"--Mark Twain)

Revenge is not sweet.

1. Revenge is not always sweet as proved when a mother cuts off her own son's head when she thinks she is

avenging the life of her own son who has been taken off by Indians.

("The Indian's Head"--Lorimer Stoddard)

2. The man who defies and curses Nature's handiwork, in the form of beautiful water lilies, because they hinder his progress, may find himself to be the accursed victim of these very lilies.

   ("The Man Who Cursed the Lilies"--Charles Tenney Jackson)

3. Revenge is not always sweet, for to him who has planned to take revenge on a daughter for her father's actions may come disaster and destruction.

   ("Wondersmith"--Fitz-James O'Brien)

Revenge is inevitable.

1. Revenge may be a long time in coming, but it is inevitable among Indian tribes.

   ("The Two Camps"--William G. Simms)

2. Revenge for the killing of the man she secretly loved is attained in the only way she knew as in keeping with her setting,--poisonous death.

   ("A Death on Eight' Avenue"--Oscar Graeve)

Revenge is essential.

1. To obtain love of girl, man must kill the murderer of her father.

   ("The Inroad of the Nabajo"--Albert Pike)

DEATH

Death is powerful.

1. Death alone can open the eyes of some to the troubles immediately surrounding them.
   ("Alma Mater"--O. F. Lewis)
2. Death will square all the accounts.
   ("A Coffin for Anna"--Elsie M. Rushfeldt)
3. Death makes us realize the value and character of people.
   ("Mrs. Schwellenbach's Receptions"--Marie Luhrs)
4. Death is a means of escape from a life that is intolerable.
   ("The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze"--William Saroyan)
5. The end of life for some is but the beginning for other.
   ("Bus to Biarritz"--Madelene Cole)
6. Tragedy of death is capable of uniting friends, families, and enemies.
   ("Along a Sandy Road"--Ellen Bishop)
7. Death is a potent factor in shaping the lives of the ones left behind.
   ("The Mourning Veil"--Harriet B. Stowe)
8. Death is one of the greatest healers of human differences.
   ("The Wake"--Donn Byrne)

Death is inevitable.

1. Death is inevitable for all; no power on earth can prevent its coming; no human being is immune.
   ("The Masque of the Red Death"--Edgar Allan Poe)
2. Death comes and in its wake there is sorrow for the beloved ones, but the world goes on as though nothing had happened.
   ("On An Errand of Mercy"--Brander Matthews)
3. Old age and death are sure and inevitable for all, no matter what means are taken to escape them.
   ("The Apothecary"--Louis Bromfield)
4. Death will not be cheated, regardless of all the subterfuges man may employ. It brings a shattering effect upon the survivor.
   ("The Little Wife"--William March)

FAMILY PRIDE AND RACIAL PRIDE

Family pride is traditional.

1. Pride and tradition of family is the dominant characteristic of the aristocratic land owners of the South.

   ("Lijah"--Edgar Valentine Smith)
2. There must be devotion of all members of the family to the principles of family honor, integrity, and highmindedness.

   ("Deep Water"--J. P. Marquand)

Family pride is powerful.

1. Pride and tradition in family and locality cannot bear to permit any "foreign" element to become part of the whole.

   ("What Do You Mean--Americans?"--Wilbur Daniel Steele)
2. Pride in his family's ability to butt helps a little nigger to save his white pal's life.

   ("Buttin Blood"--Pernet Patterson)
3. Those who have grown up in families and localities that are rich in memory and tradition for the, cannot bear the thought of foreigners entering and taking over their lands.

   ("The Silver Sword"--Wilbur Daniel Steele)
4. An inheritance deeper and stronger than individual inclination keeps certain peoples doing things in the way of their ancestors.

   ("Ancestral Home"--Dorothy Canfield)

Racial pride is powerful.

1. The lure of the exotic is strong in us, but the tie of native blood is the victor.
   ("Purple Eyes"--John Luther Long)
2. The person with visions and persistence is the one who will do most for his race.
   ("Monkey Motions"--Eleanor Mercein Kelly)

DESTINY

Destiny is inevitable.

1. A man's destiny is not to be tampered with, for Fate will bring him eventually to the end he deserves.
   ("The Getaway"--O. F. Lewis)
2. "There's nothing I can do about it."
   ("The Killers"--Ernest Hemingway)
3. There is no way out for the woman who must live from one man to another; she must forever be a sport that she may fulfill her tragic destiny.
   ("Big Blonde"--Dorothy Parker)
4. There's bound to be a reckoning and a squaring up for everyone for his deeds; if it isn't the law, it's the underworld, or eventually God.
   ("Dressing-Up"--W. R. Burnett)
5. Man cannot escape destiny.
   ("Faith, Hope, and Charity"--Irvin S. Cobb)
6. It was inevitable. She was headed for this from the minute she was born, with her Indian mind and her Gringo soul and her beautiful body. She never had a ghost of a chance.
   ("Encarnacion"--Alicia O'Reardon Overbeck)
7. One may be born only to feed physical hunger.
   ("Death in the Woods"--Sherwood Anderson)

8. There are still some women to be found who ask for and receive nothing from life but hardship and worry and yet feel a great sense of gratitude.
   ("Mrs. Sabin"--Caroline Slade)
9. The forces of Nature cannot be dealt with successfully; rather they must be accepted--whether it be a tornado, or what.
   ("Family in the Wind"--F. Scott Fitzgerald)

WORLDLY AMBITION

Worldly ambition is futile.

1. It is futile to build one's worldly ambitions too high for they may be knocked down instantaneously by the hand of God.

   ("The Ambitious Guest"--Nathaniel Hawthorne)

2. It is futile for human beings to endeavor to attain perfection, for God alone is perfect.

   ("The Birthmark"--Nathaniel Hawthorne)

3. The grasping scheming individual who constantly uses others for her own benefit may find that she is the one left in her previous victim's undesired position.

   ("Stella Crozier"--Booth Tarkington)

4. "Sufficient unto eternity is the glory of the hour."

   ("The Weaver Who Clad the Summer"--Harris Merton Lyon)

5. Man through experimental science, cannot change God's plan of life for us on earth.

   ("Dr. Heidegger's Experiment"--Nathaniel Hawthorne)

6. To attempt to conquer a ghost by physical or any other means is futile.

   ("The Upper Birth"--F. Marion Crawford)

Worldly ambition is individual.

1. Fame is a secret that cannot be told. It must be discovered by the seeker.

   ("The Urge"--Maryland Allen)

2. Desire to get ahead in one's work will lead one to do some of the queerest things possible.
   ("Professional Pride"--Ruth Burr Sanborn)

FEAR

Fear is a powerful factor in shaping human lives.

1. Fear can magnify a trivial matter into one of tremendous importance.
   ("The Notary of Perigueux"--H. W. Longfellow)
2. Fear is a might power in shaping the lives of individuals; eventually it brings their utter downfall.
   ("The Fall of the House of Usher"--Edgar Allan Poe)
3. Fear of anything may be so intense as to ruin one's life.
   ("Lightning"--Wilbur Daniel Steele)
4. Fear and desperation, lest popularity be not here, lead the "deb" to "any port in a storm."
   ("The Five Minute Girl"--Mary Hastings Bradley)

Fear is caused by various stimuli.

1. The inability to name a thing or creature, that fear of the unkown, is one of the greatest causes of mental anguish.
   ("What Was It? A Mystery"--Fitz-James O'Brien)
2. The unknown produces the greatest of fear in an individual; sometimes to the point of death.
   ("The Damned Thing"--Ambrose Pierce)

Fear can be subdued.

1. Faced by demand for courage, fear flees.
   ("Fear"--James Warner Bellah)
   ("He Man"--Marjory Stoneman Douglas)

SUPERSTITION

Superstition is powerful.

1. Superstition is so strong among certain groups in Hayti that no missionary can convert them; rather he is their victim in the end.

   ("The Victim of His Vision"--Gerald Chittenden)

2. Superstition, sprouting out of ignorance, and twisted honest nature into a myriad of perverted and detractive shapes, and changed man with reason into a beast of the lower level.

   ("Snake Doctor"--Irving S. Cobb)

3. Superstition supported by ignorance and fear is an important factor in the lives of certain peoples.

   ("The Parrot"--Walter Duranty)

   ("The Seventh Son"--James Hall)

   ("Black Art and Ambrose"--Guy Gilpartic)

Superstition can be defeated.

1. Superstition harnessed with petty vengeance loses in the struggle against enlightenment aided by generosity.

   ("Done Got Over"--Alma and Paul Ellerbe)

LESSER HUMAN TRAITS

Jealousy is human.

1. Jealousy may become such a monamania that the victim may see no one or nothing in balances proportions and thus be the distinct cause of much suffering and sorrow.
   ("Pot of Tulips"--Fitz James O'Brien)
2. Jealousy will lead a man to the utmost lengths--such as killing his wife by placing poison in her drink.
   ("The Tree of Heaven"--Robert W. Chambers)

Gambling is human.

1. The gambling instinct in man is like a cancerous disease which steadily ruins an individual, and from which there is only temporary but rarely permanent relief.
   ("The Tipster"--Edwin Lefevee)
2. Caution and thrift refuse the purchase of a toy, yet retreat before the gambler's spirit.
   ("The One Hundred Dollar Bill"--Booth Tarkington)

Curiosity is human.

1. Curiosity is a potent factor in the life of an individual; too much may bring him to grief.
   ("How the Raven Died"--Alfred Henry Lewis)

GENERATIONS

Generations cause struggle.

1. There is a contant lack of understanding between the older and younger generation.
   ("Each in his generation"--Maxwell Struthers Burt)
   ("Art for Art's Sake"--Richmond Brooks Barrett)
   ("Not Wanted"--Jesse Lynch Williams)
   ("The Way of the Transgressor"--Grace Stone Coates)
2. The characteristics of one generation are frequently passed on to a succeeding generation; for example, for the Swedish groups in Wisconsin, the river is a source of fear as was the sea in Beowulf.
   ("Witch Mary"--Genevieve Larsson)

FAMILIAR PROVERBS

1. You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
   ("Martha's Fireplace"--Hamlin Garland
   ("The Wild Horse of Tartary"--Clara Morris)
2. When the cat's away, the mice will play.
   ("Peter Projects"--Muriel Brady)
3. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.
   ("T. B."--Fannie Hurst)
4. There's never an ill wind but blows someone some good.
   ("The Ill Wind"--Robert Robinson)
5. Money is the root of all evil.
   ("The One Hundred Dollar Bill"--Booth Tarkington)
   ("The Woman on the Shore"--Marquis W. Childs)
6. Blood will always tell.
   ("Sheener"--Ben Ames Williams)
7. One cannot take care of too many kettles on the fire.
   ("The Argosies"--Alexander Hall)
8. Life is stranger than fiction.
   ("Night Club"--Katharine Brush)
9. Murder Will Out.
   ("An Episode at Pintail Lake"--Irvin S. Cobb)
   ("Grayling; or Murder Will Out"--William G. Simms)
10. A guilty conscience needs no accuser.
    ("The Bee-Tree"--Caroline M. S. Kirkland)

11. Blood runs thicker than water.
    ("Wash"--William Faulkner)
12. Habit is a great thing.
    ("The Consecrated Coal Scuttle"--Dorothy Thomas)
13. Scotch thrift is proverbial.
    ("Thrift"--William Faulkner)
14. The ways of God to man are justified.
    ("No Final Word"--Alvah C. Bessie)
15. There's no honor among theives.
    ("The Triple Cross"--George Randolph Chester)

MISCELLANEOUS THEMES OF STORIES I HAVE NOT CLASSIFIED

1. Home, with its numerous associations, is the dearest place in the world, especially to those who have left through disgrace or embitterment.

   ("The Homesick Ladies"--Sidney Howard)

2. The average human being is gullible, expecially when get-rich-quick schemes are in order.

   ("Amethyst"--Edwin Corle)

3. Anxiety for a woman's safety in time of danger makes men hurry to protect her and causes each to suspect the other.

   ("Winter Meeting"--Benjamin Uppel)

4. The greatest thief is oneself; he is the one to be feared; for he may end by leaving you nothing.

   ("Theft"--Katharine Anne Porter)

5. In the spring a young man's fancy may turn to love but the activities of spring along other lines manifest themselves just as plainly.

   ("The Voice of the Turtle"--Edythe Squier Draper)

6. The urge for freedom from the shackles of work is a strong instinct in most individuals.

   ("Two Men Free"--Whit Burnett)

7. Lack of pride and courage in an individual will make his life a hell on earth.

   ("Pride"--Miriam Allen de Ford)

8. Stupidity, race prejudice, and greed cause much of the inhumanity of the world.

   ("No More Trouble for Jedwick"--Louis Paul)

9. That instinct for possession, for domination, is as strong in the adolescent youth as in his father, and should be encouraged.

   ("Pigeon Flight"--Benjamin Appel)

10. Life proves itself to be intolerable when an individual must work constantly at a position to which he is neither mentally or physically adjusted.

    ("Shanghai Scene"--Pearl S. Buck)

11. The convict, completely brutalized, has but one aim--to escape; and he will do absolutely anything to attain this goal.

    ("Love Story"--Robert Smith)

12. The nervous psychopathic woman badgers everybody around her with her martyrdom.

    ("Portrait of a Woman"--Len Arnold)

13. Difficult it is to adjust oneself to an environment bowed down with tradition.

    ("To the Invader"--Nancy Hale)

14. Human life in certain localities of peace, isolation, and safety, must share the interest of its background.

    ("Gal Young Un"--Marjorie K. Rawlings)

15. Human beings, the world over, are ready to get a little more for their money, to impose on the laborer, if they will personally gain by so doing.
("The Frill"--Pearl S. Buck)

16. Man is not the dominant superior member of mankind.
("She Was Right Once"--Booth Tarkington)

17. Complete unhappiness there is bound to be for those who attempt to carry out miscast roles.
("The False Talisman"--Charles Caldwell Dobie)

18. The innocence and lack of suspicion of children are traits to be admired and developed by adults.
("Lobster John's Annie"--Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements)

19. There's always a great necessity for the helpful, efficient, courageous woman in time of war as well as for fighting men.
("Born on an Iceberg"--Capt. John W. Thomason, Jr.)

20. We're all alike, neither Jew nor Greek, free or tied up when we get in a tight place.
("Neither Jew nor Greek"--William M. John)

21. An obsession with some takes one form, with others another; it may bring about the kindest individual possible.
("The Man Who Caught the Weather"--Bess Streeter Aldrich)

22. A weakness in a man is the cause of his downfall whether that weakness be for liquor or something else.
("Jukes"--Bill Adams)

23. The negro's idea of heaven is that it is perfect.
("Child of God"--Boork Bradford)

24. The cure for insanity seems to be lacking.
("Bubbles"--Wilbur Daniel Steele)

25. The lure for the railroad is as strong in some as the lure for the sea or the circus is in others.
("The Wreck Job"--Karl W. Detzer)

26. A reputation sticks to an individual much as the proverbial leech, and one of the hardest tasks is to change a bad one into a good one.
("Nice Neighbours"--Mary S. Watts)

27. The hereditary factor is one that requires perseverance and patience on the part of the daughter who refuses to be considered low down white trash and seeks for self-betterment.
("Prelude"--Edgar Valentine Smith)

28. Heredity opposes environment in the shaping of a human career.
("The Anglo-Saxon"--Wilbur Daniel Steele)

29. Chivalry is the outstanding characteristic of the true gentleman, even today.
("Old Peter Takes an Afternoon Off"--O. F. Lewis)

30. Certain types of women stir all men to passionate desire and longing.

("Aurore"--Ethel Watts Mumford)

31. The mating of different bloods, white with dark, is impossible of bringing happiness to either party or to their kin.

("Innocence"--Rose Wilder Lane)

32. Ships are like women; too much flattery spoils them.

("The Jinx of the Shandon Belle"--R. de S. Horn)

33. Nature can pass judgment more surely and efficiently than man.

("The Judgment of Vulcan"--Lee Foster Hartman)

34. Turning of tables proves that the accused has a much greater sense of fair play than the accuser.

("The Hands of the Enemy"--Charles Caldwell Dobie)

35. Difficult it is to change the mind of one who is set on one thing.

("Brother Rabbit's Cradle"--Joel Chandler Harris)

36. Self-accusation, a yearning for atonement and for absolution is a stronger trait than charity or kindness.

("In the Wake of War"--Hallie Erminie Rives)

37. It is unwise to tamper with scientific experiments and discoveries for serving the end of human desires.

("Frictional Electricity"--Max Adeler)

38. An obsession grips an individual to such a degree that he knows not the real from the unreal.

("The Case of Mr. Helmer"--Robert Wm. Chambers)

39. The simple pleasures of life to some are as great by comparison as the more expensive are to others.

("The Hiltons' Holiday"--Sarah Orne Jewett)

40. The wisest way in life is to mind one's own business.

("Crown's Bess"--DuBose Hayward)

41. For youth to appreciate and understand the situations and problems confronting him, the wise guidance of an older person, a father, is essential.

("Heart of Youth"--Walter J. Milenburg)

42. A practical joker often finds the tables have been turned on him, much to his extreme sorrow.

("Haircut"--Ring Lardner)

43. Squalid circumstances and surroundings, if they be of the right nature, may bring happiness to certain individuals.

("Fire and Water"--Glenway Wescott)

CONCLUSION

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From my investigation and study attendant with the preparation of this thesis, I have drawn several conclusions, which I note below.

1. The American Short Story, a popular and familiar type of literature, invariable embodies a theme, expressed or implied.

2. The two best methods of locating the theme are 1. The question method--"What am I being told this story for?" "What judgment on life does it contain for me?" and 2. The statement method--The author's purpose in writing this story was to show that--.

3. The greatest themes are those dealing with some universal phase of human life, with some matter supremely interesting to mankind in any country and in any period of time.

4. Few authors have done much with the grouping of themes. Mr. Ethan Allen Cross has made the best classification, I believe. But, to me, his groupings were not nearly sufficient, satisfying, or clarifying; they were too general and scientific.

5. My ultimate goal was to work out a catalogue of characteristic themes in the American Short Story which the average reader could readily understand. This I believe I have done.

6. All the themes I discovered during my study I was able to group under seventeen headings, adding one into which I put every theme I could not otherwise classify.

7. Themes dealing with LOVE were by far more frequent than any other theme. Then came DECEPTION, SACRIFICE, CHANGE under TIME and CIRCUMSTANCE, THE IMPORTANCE of the TRIVIAL, SUCCESS, LOYALTY, REVENGE, DEATH, FAMILY PRIDE and RACIAL PRIDE, DESTINY, WORLDY AMBITION, FEAR,SUPERSTITION, LESSER HUMAN TRAITS, GENERATIONS, and FAMILIAR PROVERBS.

8. The numerous general themes and particular themes, with the title and author of the story which embodies each of these themes, should be of tremendous help and interest to all students of the American Short Story, whether they are attempting to study the story from an analytic or a creative point of view.

SUMMARY

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The American Short Story as a medium of writing is in accord with our pace of living today, especially when into a short piece of literature can be brought the sadness and the gladness, the hopelessness and optimism of human endeavor, all of which are pertinent and interesting themes to mankind in any country and in any period of time.

Numerous are the definitions of theme set forth by short story writers, but a working definition evolved from the study of the several is, The theme is the central, dominant, underlying idea of the story, which in reality, is the author's expression concerning some general or particular problem or truth pertinent to human beings. Everyone agrees that every story, at least every significant story, embodies a theme, can be reduced to a simple, abstract statement of theme or situation. Frequently this theme is openly expressed at the beginning or end of the story; more often it is implied, merely suggested, the latter method being considered more artistic and more effective in its subtle challenge to the intellect.

The restrictions or qualifications concerning the theme are many and noteworthy. Reduced to simplicity we may say,

1. The theme must be a telling one.
2. The theme must not be too obvious, too huge, too controversial, or too universal.
3. The theme must be striking or unique in some way.
4. The theme must be plausible.

5. The theme is never original, and need not be true.
6. Themes may be twofold in one story, but not contradictory.
7. Barred themes are those that are trite, improper, polemic, unfamiliar.

Since theme is such an important part of the short story how shall one find it? What steps shall one take to locate the underlying dominant, central idea the author was attempting to express? In stories where the theme is openly expressed there is no necessity for following any predetermined method, but numerous are the stories where theme is implied and left to the imagination and intelligence of the reader to discover it. One of the best methods to use in attempting to discover that "something" every good writer has had to say is to ask two pertinent questions. 1. "What am I being told this story for?" 2. "What judgment on life does it contain for me?" Or an equally good method to follow is to begin one's statement of the theme by saying to oneself, "The author's purpose in writing this story was to show that---."

After determining the themes of short stories it is interesting to note that many recur time and again, with variations, to be sure. Ethan Allan Cross has grouped all themes of the short story under seven headings which are;

1. The exhibition of some natural law, or apparent lawlessness of nature.

2. An illustration of a phase of human nature.
3. The exhibition of some human passion in a striking, unusual, or tense situation.
4. The reproduction of a phase of life in a given time, place, or occupation.
5. The delineation of character.
6. The development or disintegration of character under the stress of some emotion or circumstance.
7. An impression of life.

This classification of short stories by Mr. Cross is worthy and scholarly, but to me, is not nearly sufficient, satisfying, or clarifying. The headings are too general, too scientific for the average short story reader. They do not seem to get to the core of my conception of theme and therefore naturally would not coincide with my idea of classification of characteristic themes in the American Short Story.

Under eighteen headings I have grouped the characteristic themes I found in the one thousand odd short stories I read and studied. These headings include the following; 1.Love, 2.Dedeption, 3. Sacrifice, 4. Change under Time and Circumstance, 5. The Importance of the Trivial, 6. Success, 7. Loyalty, 8. Revenge, 9. Death, 10. Family Pride and Racial Pride, 11. Destiny, 12.Worldly Ambition, 13. Fear, 14. Superstition, 15. Lesser Human Traits, 16. Generations, 17. Familiar Proverbs, and 18. Miscellaneous Themes of Stories Have Not Classified.

Under each general heading is a sub-topic sentence stating the general theme and under that are numerous particular themes attendant with titles and authors of stories which embody that special theme.

Let me illustrate one of my groupings.

LOVE

Love is powerful.

1. Love always finds a way out of the most difficult situations.

   ("Jean Michaud's Little Ship"--Charles G. D. Roberts)

2. 3. 4. etc.

Love is beneficial.

1. It's better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved, for at least one has those beautiful memories to comfort one, later in life.

   ("Contest"--Frances N. Hart)

2. 3. 4. etc.

Love is inevitable.

1. Love may come under surprising circumstances to individuals.

   ("Old Maid"--Rose Wilder Lane)

2. 3. 4. etc.

Love is spiritual.

1. Human beings can rarely sustain a lofty note be-

yond the measure of a supreme moment.

("The Thing They Loved"--Maurice Rutledge)

Similar to the classifications under the general heading, LOVE, is material for my other general headings. My grouping of characteristic themes is of a simple nature and is capable of being understood by the average reader of the American Short Story.

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